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No. 315.

KANSAS KING; OR, THE RED RIGHT HAND.

BY BUFFALO BILL, (Hon. Wm. F. Cody),
Author of "Deadly Eye, the Unknown Scout," "The Prairie Rover," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

RED-HAND, THE SCOUT.

ABOVE a dark mass of storm-clouds, gathered in the western skies, peeps a brilliant ray from the declining sun, which penetrates far into the deepest recesses of a rocky gorge, hidden away in the mountain fastnesses of the Black Hills, where the iron heel of the pale-face has seldom trod beneath its rude step the velvet grass and wild flowers, and where the fertile valleys, mountain steeps, and level plains are sacred to the moccasined foot of the red-skin.

And yet, into that retreat of the red-man one pale-face has dared to intrude, for the ray of sunlight falls full upon the tall and sinewy form of a white man, clad in dressed buckskin, elaborately fringed and beaded, and with his bold, handsome features shaded beneath a broad felt hat, looped up upon the left side with a small pin, cut from the purest red coral, and exquisitely carved to represent a human hand, the fingers shut tight excepting the forefinger, which pointed straight out, as if directing the way to be pursued by the moccasined feet of the wearer.

It was a strangely handsome face upon which the sunlight fell, upon which dwelt a haunting shadow cast there by some dread sorrow of bygone years, and a sternness proved a determination to suffer and be strong.

The skin was darkly bronzed by long exposure to sunshine, wind and storm, and a mass of gold-brown hair, wavy and rich in line, fell nearly down to his waist, while his face was beardless, excepting a mustache, and every feature was perfect, the eyes being particularly lustrous, and holding in their dark-blue depths a fascination that was irresistibly attractive.

Lying at the feet of the man was a hunter's knapsack, to which was strapped an oil-cloth blanket and provision pouch, while in his belt were a brace of navy revolvers and a large hunting-knife with an ivory handle and double-edged blade.

As he thus stood there in the sunlight, his hunter's pack at his feet, and whole manner one of repose, he leaned with both hands upon the muzzle of a rifle of a recent manufacture, for it carried, ready for instant use, sixteen leaden messengers of death to hurl upon a foe.

As the hands thus rested upon the rifle's muzzle, the right above the left, it was observable that the former was almost *blood-red* in hue.

Was the right hand of the hunter stained with blood, or was the skin never to be cleansed of its scarlet stain?

A closer inspection proved that the well-shaped hand, small but of iron grasp, was indelibly stamped with red from the wrist to the end of the shapely fingers.

Had the hunter thus alone in the Black Hills, been born with that blood-red hand?

Had some crime of bygone years brought that red curse upon him?

Or, had the hand been stained thus for some deadly deed it had done in the past?

Reader, let the sequel unfold to you the history of Red-Hand, the Scout.

CHAPTER II.

A DEADLY RECOGNITION.

As Red-Hand, the Scout, thus stood in the deep gorge of the mountains, with daylight dying around him, and the sunlight tingling up the bold and rugged scenery upon every hand, there suddenly came to his ears the sound of some object breaking through the thick underbrush that fringed the left of the gorge.

Was it some wild animal of the hills, in pursuit of smaller game, or a red-skin, almost equally as wild as the beasts of the forests?

Whether one or the other, it was a foe, the Scout well knew. Quickly his pack was slung upon his back, a bound carried him to the shelter of a tree near by, and the daring man stood at bay, ready to face whatever danger threatened him.

A louder rustling among the bushes, a parting of the leafy covert, and a large stag bounded out into the full view of the Scout; who raised his rifle as if about to fire, but quickly lowered it—as he suddenly beheld, directly behind the flying animal, another form that brought a flush of surprise to his face, for there stood before him one of his own race.

Bounding out into the clearing the stranger directly raised his rifle, glanced along its glittering barrel, and then came the flash and sharp report, the death-knell of the flying stag.



The Scout cut with his knife the name of the man he had slain and the date of his death.

Ere the rattling echoes of the rifle had died away far down the mountain gorge, there broke forth upon the air one long, loud, terrible cry of mingled joy and rage, and with a face as livid as the dead, Red-Hand, the Scout, bounded from behind his sheltering tree; his rifle fairly leaped to his shoulder, a bright burst of flame from the muzzle, a ringing report, and the hunter who had slain the stag threw up his arms, clutched wildly at the air, staggered forward, attempted to cry out, and with a groan fell dead upon the velvet grass, the life-blood streaming from a ragged wound in his broad breast.

With rapid strides the Scout advanced and stood over the prostrate form of the man he had slain, and into his face crept a look that was hard to fathom, for there dwelt there hatred, sorrow, triumph, and remorse, all commingled.

Though limp and stiffening with death, the form was of splendid proportions, and clad in a full suit of buckskin.

The head was sheltered by a soft felt hat, beneath which were clusters of dark curls clinging around the neck, while the face, pale and lifeless, was most striking in appearance and had doubtless once been exceedingly hand-

some, ere the stamp of reckless dissipation had been set thereon.

By his side lay a Spencer rifle, and in his belt were revolvers and knife, none of which had served him when face to face with the man who had taken his life, and who stood for long moments regarding him, his face each moment growing more bitter and stern.

At length the lips of Red-Hand, the Scout, quivered slightly, parted, and he said, half aloud:

"At last we have met, Boyd Bernard; you and I!

"Yes, met, here in the very heart of the

wilderness—how different from our last meeting, seven years ago.

"Yes, met! you to fall dead at my feet, and your soul hurled into the bottomless pit by my hand.

"Dead, Boyd Bernard! ay, dead you are, for my aim never fails, especially when the muzzle of my rifle covered *your* heart.

"A strange fate brought your footsteps hither! A strange destiny led me alone into these wilds where I believed the pale-face never came.

"Your fate led you to death! my destiny led me to avenge; but, oh, God! it is terrible to see you lie there, slain by my hand, Boyd Bernard, and for the sake of the olden time I will not leave you here to be torn limb from limb by wild beasts.

"No; I will bury you yonder beneath that sheltering tree, and the shrill winds that sweep through this gorge will be your only requiem—a grave in the wilderness your only tomb."

A moment longer the scout stood, silently and painfully musing, and then the night shadows creeping on, warned him to commence his work.

Unslinging, from a loop behind his belt, a small but serviceable hatchet, he began to dig a grave in the soft earth beneath a sheltering tree.

An hour's work, and he had descended to a sufficient depth, and seeking the thicket, he cut a number of poles just the length of the grave.

On the stiffened form was tenderly raised and laid in its earthly bed, the feet toward the rising sun, and above it the poles were placed and securely fastened, for the Scout knew that wild beasts would attempt to rob the grave of its human occupant.

Carefully and compactly the grave was filled, and then, in the smooth bark of the tree at its head, the Scout cut with his knife the name of the man he had slain and the date of his death.

It read:

BOYD BERNARD,
BORN IN
Portsmouth, N. H., January 1st, 1838.

SLAIN IN
The Black Hills, July 10th, 1866."

As the Scout cut the last figure in the inscription, the darkness of night came upon the valley, while far above, on the eastward slope of the hills, was visible the rosy tinge of the departed sunshine, and upon the summit of the western mountains was the mellow light of the rising moon, tinging with silvery radiance the forest-clad scenery, grand in its gloom, desolation and deathlike silence.

CHAPTER III.

A STARTLING APPARITION.

HAVING completed his sad task, Red-Hand, the Scout, replaced his hatchet in its sling, shouldered his traps, and with a moan of bitter anguish crushed back through his shut teeth, started down the valley with steps slow and uncertain, as if he hardly cared whither he went.

A walk of half a mile, and he came to a precipitous hillside, which suddenly brought him to a halt and recalled him to himself, for he glanced quickly around, and then said:

"Why, this is the way I came into the gorge—I am strangely moody to-night; and no wonder, when, two hours ago, my hand took the life of Boyd Bernard.

"Well, I must away from here, and—yes, I must again pass his grave.

"Oh! that I had been less quick in my shot, or less true in my aim, and then his lips would have told me of her; but I forgot—she is dead—ay, forever dead to me, even though she were living.

"And in what land lies her fair form which once I so loved to hold close to my heart?

"Did I know where was her grave, I would seek it even to the uttermost parts of the earth, for, guilty though she was, I loved her—yes, love her still—and above her last resting-place would gladly kneel.

"But he is dead, too, and my hand forever sealed his lips—Hark!"

As the Scout paused suddenly in his walk, there burst forth upon the crisp air the sound of a voice in song.

It was a beautiful, clear voice, but it sounded strangely weird-like there in that wild gorge, and spell-bound, Red-Hand stood and listened as the echoes broke upon hillsides and swept on down the valley.

It was a woman's voice, and like one in a dream stood the Scout, as she trilled forth in rich tones a song unfamiliar to his ears, but

the words of which sunk deep into his heart, and clear and sweet rung the refrain:

"In dreams I sigh for those dark eyes
That ever lit with love for me;
But they are vajid, their light is gone,
And sorrow's night shades gather fast,
As through the vale I'm borne along—
An autumn leaf upon the blast."

Like a startled fawn, Red-Hand, the Scout, stood in silence, and then his eyes became suddenly fixed upon a form that appeared upon a rocky shelf, overhanging the tree, beneath which was the new-made grave of Boyd Bernard.

Upon that shelf of rock suddenly appeared a slender form—a woman's, clad in a garb of white, and down her back hung heavy masses of golden hair.

The moon had risen above the eastern hills, and poured a full flood of light directly upon her, and distinctly Red-Hand beheld the beautiful, sad face, the large eyes glancing down into the gloom of the gorge beneath, as if to penetrate the dark secret buried there.

Then the song ceased, with the words, "An autumn leaf upon the blast," and the clear voice called out in tones that again startled the silent depths:

"Boyd! Boyd Bernard! Come!"

With a startled cry of fear, wrung from his brave heart, Red-Hand, the Scout, turned and dashed away at mad speed adown the gloomy gorge, his staring eyes ever and anon turned behind him as he ran, as though expecting to see upon his path a pursuing phantom, a being of the other world.

With the speed of a deer he sped along, his teeth shut close, his hands fiercely clinching his rifle, his breath drawn quick and hard, and while being wrought up to a pitch of terrible excitement by what he had seen, the terrible apparition that had come upon him in that wild gorge of the Black Hills.

Thus miles were passed over, and yet, through the long hours of the lonely night, he pressed on, until the morning sun found him far away from the scene where had occurred the fatal recognition of Boyd Bernard, and where, as if in punishment for his deed of blood, had appeared before him a very phantom of the mountains.

CHAPTER IV.

AT THE GRAVE OF HIS FOE.

Five years have passed since Red-Hand, the Scout, fled in superstitious awe from the Black Hill country, leaving behind him a grave, to mark his footsteps through the wild wilderness, far beyond the confines of civilization.

Again the sunlight falls aslant the rocky gorge, as upon that afternoon, five years before, and the forest-clad hills are budding forth with the tender leaves of spring, and the birds trill merrily amid their emerald coverts.

The inscription yet remains, worn by the time that has gone by, and upon this the eye of the hunter sadly rests.

Though five years have passed they have left no trace of their footsteps upon the face of the Scout, excepting to make the features harder and sterner, for the man thus standing by the grave of Boyd Bernard is none other than Red-Hand, who had once fled precipitately from the spot, as if in very fear.

He is dressed pretty nearly as upon his former visit to the gorge, his black felt hat still looped up with the red coral band, though his knife and revolver are of a newer pattern, and his rifle is one of Evans' improved repeaters, capable of firing thirty-five times without reloading.

When, five years before, Red-Hand, the Scout, fled from the Black Hills, he believed he would never again profane its unknown fastnesses with his footsteps; but as time passed on and the eye of adventurers and hunters were turned toward the country now called the "Miners' New Eldorado," a small band of hardy men determined to penetrate into its unexplored depths, and seek there the golden fortunes said to lie buried beneath the rocky hills.

The guide of that brave band was Red-Hand, the Scout, for he was well-known along the frontier, and one of the most daring men on the border, and his skill in wood and prairie craft, and ability to outwit Indian cunning, had gained him a widespread reputation among the bold bordermen and the soldiers of the outfit.

Of Red-Hand little, if anything, was known regarding his real name, whence he came, or why he, a man of superior education and ability, had banished himself from the marts of civilization, and become an Indian-fighter and hunter upon the western border.

Five years before his first solitary pilgrimage into the Black Hills he had appeared upon the frontier, well armed and mounted, and possessed of considerable money, and his polite manners and ready generosity soon won for him many admirers, though no man among his companions could boast of being his intimate friend, or of any knowledge regarding him.

His blood-red right hand attracted attention, and yet but one man had dared to make jest regarding it, and he never repeated the offense, for he found the stranger not the one to trifle with.

At first the life on the plains seemed strange to Red-Hand, for by that name he now became known, and, as if to encourage it, or to hide his real name, he adorned his hat with the red coral band; but he quickly learned the crafty ways of the Indian, could soon strike a trail and follow it across the prairies, became a dead shot with rifle and revolver, and a desperate hand with the knife, and, before two years' stay on the border, was noted as a scout and hunter of superior ability, and a man of undaunted courage.

When the band of hardy pioneers, seeking to discover if the Indian legends of gold in the Black Hills was true, set out upon their expedition, Red-Hand, the Scout, was selected as the guide, for it was known that, years before, he had made a solitary pilgrimage into the country.

Of that lonely scout Red-Hand never spoke, but his comrades believed he had discovered more than he would divulge.

What that discovery was the reader already knows; yet, unable to resist the temptation to once again visit the wild scenes of the Black Hills, the Scout had accepted the position of guide, and shortly after the score of daring plairsmen started for the unknown land, thoroughly mounted and equipped in every particular, for complete defense and offense.

After long days of travel the hill-country

* The Evans Rifle is manufactured near Lewiston, Maine; contains thirty-five shots, and is one of the most complete and easily-handled guns ever made. It was invented in '70. I think.—BUFFALO.

was reached, and remembering a number of advantageous localities for a safe camp, Red-Hand conducted the party to one of the most favorable positions, and, after a short rest, set out alone to visit the gorge, several leagues above the encampment, where he left his companions, for an irresistible attraction lured him once more into the gorge, where was hidden the grave of Boyd Bernard.

CHAPTER V.

A TIMELY RESCUE.

For a long time did Red-Hand stand in silent bitterness at the grave of Boyd Bernard, his eyes cast down, and his two hands resting upon the muzzle of his rifle.

At length, with a deep drawn sigh, wrung from his inmost heart, the Scout slung his rifle across his shoulder and strode away, his eyes carefully scanning the ground, for around the grove were traces that showed other feet than had lately been there.

Steadily following the trail, it led him, after a tramp of a mile, into a narrow gulch, where his eyes were suddenly startled by the unexpected and ringing report of a rifle, followed by a series of wild yells, which he well knew to be the war-cry of the wild Sioux of the northern tribes.

Again a single shot followed, and feeling confident that some one of his comrades had left camp and met with a band of Indians, the Scout ran hastily forward, and turning a bend in the gulch beheld a sight that for the moment deprived him of action, so great was his surprise.

Upon a ledge of rock, and partially protected by a huge boulder, stood a young girl, whose hair was suddenly startled by the unexpected and ringing report of a rifle, followed by a series of wild yells, which he well knew to be the war-cry of the wild Sioux of the northern tribes.

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"I'm going to spend all my money!" cried one. "What do I want of money where I'm goin'?"

Another tried to sell to a friend of the deputy sheriff, who was gazing curiously at the prisoners, an old silver watch that wouldn't go. He was "dead broke," he said, and wanted some money.

By way of banter the bystander offered him a dollar for it, and the offer was at once accepted.

In the meanwhile, an old, decrepit-looking man, with long white hair, and a thick white beard, approached the grating with a basket containing papers of chewing-tobacco, and some stale cakes. He speedily disposed of his small stock in trade, all but one cake.

"This cake is for the light-haired boy," he said.

Fergus started as he found himself thus alighted to, and he thought the voice sounded familiar in his ears. He approached the grating.

"Here's the cake, bubbly," continued the old man.

Fergus extended his hand for it, and as the old man placed it in his grasp, he pressed his hand significantly, and whispered:

"I'll get you out of this, Fergus. Watch at night—the first dark one that comes—and when you hear the sound of a fish-horn, jump into the river, and strike out for the opposite shore. There'll be a boat ready to pick you up. Mum! don't give it away to anybody!"

Another significant pressure of the hand and the old man hobbled away.

Fergus was in a maze. The old man was Mr. John Jackson, the mysterious tenant of the upper floor of the Baxter street house.

"Well, I hope he will get me off," mused Fergus, "for I don't want to live long with such a crowd as this."

In the course of an hour a little steamer, with the name, "Minnehannock," painted on her wheel houses, came puffing up to the pier. She had just come down from the Island.

The prisoners were taken on board in pairs; the men were confined in the hold in the bow, the women in the stern.

These holds were dark, being only lighted by the grating, through which the daylight cast a few faint beams.

As they were not provided with seats, not even a rude bench, the prisoners leaned against the sides, or sat on the steps.

The steamer cast off, and steamed back from whence she had come. The trip to the Island occupied about a quarter of an hour.

The gang-plank was run out. The hatches were opened, and the prisoners were brought out, formed in line, and guarded by the deputy-sheriff, a keeper, and two trusted convicts, were marched along the water's edge to the penitentiary, a guard-boat keeping abreast of the procession.

It is seldom that a prisoner escapes during the trip from the Tombs to the Island.

The deputy sheriff made his boasts to that effect.

"I never had a prisoner get away yet," he told me, when I was taking some notes of the Island and its management. "Dutch Harmon tried it when he was brought here. I had him handcuffed, and he got loose, but I pulled my revolver on him, and told him I'd let daylight through him, and he gave it up as a bad job. He carries a ball and a chain about the Island now."

Arriving at the prison, the convicts were all taken into a room, where were bath-tubs, shaving chairs, and scales.

Keeper Raywood sat at a desk, and four convicts were in attendance. The name, age, residence, and occupation, religion, and height of each woman was registered, and they were sent to another room, there to be bathed, have their hair cut, be clothed in the prison garb, and assigned their cells and work.

In the meantime, two of the convicts had begun to cut the hair of the newly arrived prisoners, and to shave them. Another was getting ready the striped suits, and the fourth was stripping and bathing them, and giving them the striped prison-suits to put on. While this was in progress, the keeper asked them the same questions that the women had been called upon to answer.

The poor fellows in the hands of the rough barbers winced as the dull shears pulled their hair, and the razors rasped their faces.

Fergus felt decidedly rebellious when he found himself in the chair, and the shears at work among his long flaxen locks. But he kept down his rising gorse as best he could, knowing the folly of any attempt at resistance, and comforting himself with the reflection that his stay upon the Island would not be of long duration.

"You look like a shaved monkey!" remarked the boy-thief, with a grin of satisfaction, as he contemplated Fergus' shorn locks.

"You're too fresh!" retorted Fergus. "You'll get your head busted if you fool 'round me."

The boy-thief laughed, sneeringly.

"Better spell able first," he rejoined.

"Hush up!" cried the keeper. "No fighting allowed here. You're too cheeky, both of you; but we'll take the starch out of you yet!"

All having been dressed in the prison garb, their discarded clothing was tied in bundles, to which labels were attached, a memorandum was made on the books, and the bundles were stored away to be returned to the men at the expiration of their terms of imprisonment.

Then each man was searched, and money, knives, pencils, and writing material of all kinds were taken from them and registered. They were allowed to keep tobacco, handkerchiefs and suspenders.

Then the keeper read the rules of the prison to the men, and they were marched into the corridors. Their cells were assigned to them, and a cap, a blanket, and a tin dish were given to each man.

To each cell-door a label was attached, giving the name, age, nationality, crime and sentence of the inmate, with the date of his entrance. The door was then shut and locked.

Thus the door of Fergus' cell bore this inscription:

"No. 1397. FERGUS FEARNAUGHT, aged, 16 yrs. American. Vagrant. 60 days—August 20th, 186—"

He had reached Blackwell's Island.

Effingham H. Pickles sat in his office, with a pile of briefs, bound with the customary red tape, spread out on a table before him, making a show of being very busily occupied. This was a device he always adopted when he expected a visitor.

He had been looking out of his windows, glancing up the street toward Broadway—his office was on the corner of one of the streets leading in that direction—when he saw Mr. Rufus Glendenning coming down the street.

He knew his purpose must be a visit to his office, and so he prepared himself accordingly.

"Come in!" he cried, when he heard the knock at the door, and Rufus Glendenning entered the office.

"Ah, my dear Glendenning, is it you?" continued the little lawyer, obsequiously.

"Did you not expect me?" returned Glendenning.

"Well, yes, I have been looking for you, but I could not tell exactly when you would come, you know."

Glendenning glanced at the papers which Pickles had spread out so conspicuously before him upon the table.

"You appear to be busy?" he said.

"Oh, yes, I am always busy," replied Pickles, carelessly. "My practice has become extensive—quite ex-ten-sive. But I am never too busy to accommodate a friend. Pray be seated."

Glendenning seated himself in a chair upon the opposite side of the table, and removed his hat, which he placed upon the table.

"Pew! this is warm weather!" he exclaimed.

"A regular dog-day! This is the kind of weather that one feels inclined to follow Horace Greeley's advice and 'go fishing.' But to cold meat and potatoes."

"Have you learned anything?" inquired Glendenning, eagerly.

"Hum! not a great deal, but still something."

"Something?"

"Well, in fact, every thing that can be learned at present, for the boy possesses the remarkable faculty of being able to hold his tongue. He's sly, sir—sly!"

"You have discovered where he lives?"

"Yes; in a tenement house in Baxter street, on the ground floor, with a poor widow and her daughter. The daughter is sharp—sharp as vinegar!"

"How long has he lived there?"

"About two years."

"And is he known by the name of Fergus Fearnought?"

"By that, and no other."

"But hasn't he another name?"

"If he has nobody knows anything about it but himself—and he'll never tell it—ne'er!"

"What makes you think that?"

"I tried him, and my cross-examination was decidedly barren of results—de-ci-de-dy; and I flattened myself that I can extract the truth from a witness if any man can."

"The boy was probably thrown on his own resources at an early age, and that has made him suspicious of the world," said Glendenning, musingly. "A little kindness might induce him to open his lips, and tell where he came from."

"Oh, bless you! I tried that," responded Pickles, briskly. "I have never been forgetful of the old adage, which was duly impressed upon my mind in the days of my adolescence, that more flies can be captured with molasses than vinegar. I offered him a situation here in my office, and promised to make a lawyer of him."

"Did he accept?" cried Glendenning, quickly.

"I am sorry to say that he did not; he declined, absolutely de-clined."

"That's a pity! for it was a good idea."

"I thought you would approve of it."

"I do; it would have brought him right under your eye and mine."

"Certainly; that was the object; but youth is ever headstrong, and often fails to appreciate an extended benefit. Sad—but true—true!"

Pickles shook his head deprecatingly over the reflection of this youthful characteristic.

"And is there really no way of getting at this boy's true name?" inquired Glendenning, after a moment's thought.

"Hum! that remains to be seen," replied Pickles, with true legal caution.

"Do you not think he has told it to this poor widow, with whom he lives?"

"Hum!" ejaculated Pickles, noncommittal as before.

"Or to the daughter; young people are apt to be communicative with each other?"

"He might—and then, again, he might not."

"Hah! why not?"

"For a good and sufficient reason."

"What is that?"

"He may not know it himself," replied Pickles.

"By Jove! I never thought of that—you may be right; I never thought of that!" exclaimed Glendenning, with conviction.

Pickles smiled complacently.

"My dear Glendenning, it is not to be expected that you should," he rejoined. "You have not had your wits ground down to a fine point by a legal grindstone. We are the fellows to split hairs. For this we lawyers. I have given you one old adage—I'll give you another: 'It's a wise child that knows its own father,' eh! hum, ah, ha, ha."

"Yes, and by the same token, it is not every father that knows his own child. But I think you are right; I don't believe the boy knows his father's name."

"He might his mother's, though; it's easier to trace the mothers than the fathers. Have you an idea now, in confidence, in the strictest con-fidence, who he belongs to?" asked Pickles, persuasively.

"Not the slightest," replied Glendenning, with a promptitude that convinced Pickles he was speaking the truth. "That is what I want to find out."

"But the resemblance which you recognized—I thought—hum! ah!"

"That is what I want to account for. It may be accidental after all. But then for the pic-ture!" he muttered, as the recollection of it flashed through his mind. "Oh, by heaven, there is more than chance in this!"

He sprang excitedly to his feet, and hurriedly put on his hat.

"Perhaps she could tell! I'll try it!" he continued. "Keep on, my friend, you are doing well; don't lose sight of the boy! I'll see you again—in a day or two."

Glendenning hurried away.

"She! mused Pickles. "Ah, hum, hah! There's a woman in the case—always a woman! I might have known it!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 309.)

A shock-headed youth went into a music-store, and softly scratching the shin of one leg with the foot of the other, asked the proprietor if he had any new songs.

"Certainly," said that gentleman, stepping spryly back of the counter; "which one do you wish?"

"Have you got that piece called—called—"

here the young man paused and stared wildly about the store, and then suddenly added,

"Called—Gray Hairs in the Butter?"

"What's that?" said the proprietor, rubbing his hands in painful abstraction.

"Gray Hairs in the Butter," repeated the young man, changing his legs.

"Perhaps," kindly suggested a gentleman, who had boarded for twelve years, "our young friend means 'Silver Threads' among the Gold."

"That's it, by gum!" shouted the young man, in a burst of pleasure.

RACHEL.

At length, oh, love, I give myself to you; And you possess me, who have waited long And patiently. But I have waited, too, And suffered much through all the shame and wrong That have divided us. Our love was strong, But now, alas! I am no longer fair.

Now comes Tryon. Look upon my face: You see white where you see black; Wan sorrow everywhere has left its trace. Forgive me, dear, and send me quite away!

What has this worn and wasted woman here To give for love like yours? What did you say? That all these years she has but grown more dear?

Ah, God has heard the prayers I used to pray!

—Centennial Stories.

AN AMAZON'S RECEPTION.

AN INCIDENT OF 1779.

BY T C HARABAUGH.

"TRYON is coming! Tryon is coming!" was the cry that blanched many a cheek in Connecticut in the month of July, 1779.

This news that spread like wildfire about the towns of Fairfield and Norwalk was well calculated to incite alarm in patriot breasts, for Tryon was a merciless invader, and whenever he went the torch completed his work of destruction. In the month of February of the year just written he had ravaged Kingsbridge and Horse Neck, and now, for the second time, he had

his soldiers committed, under his very eye, atrocities of the most shocking description; they plundered without distinction; old and young, rich and poor fell alike the merciless hands of the king's man. East Haven, Fairfield, and Norwalk were reduced to ashes, and a thousand acts of barbarous cruelty were perpetrated on the homeless patriots. A force sufficient to check the advance of the invader could not be raised in the State. Connecticut's able-bodied patriots were absent in the army, and their homes were as defenseless as the lion's whelps when the parents are away in search of food.

Governor Tryon knew that he would find Connecticut completely at his mercy, and congratulated himself on the easy conquest that invited him to her shores. He succeeded in his errands of devastation, and returned to his superiors with victory in his hand. But he made his name odious throughout North America, and his memory execrable to every patriot in the land.

Not far from Norwalk stood the plain home of Barbara Bidack, whose husband was an artillerist doing duty under Knox. She was a large, muscular woman whose strength was prodigious; it had gained for her the singular sobriquet of "Mrs. Hercules," a title of which she was rather inclined to coarseness, and a close physiognomist would have concluded that there was Celtic blood in her veins. As she had no children, she was the sole occupant of her house, and her nearest neighbor was a young woman named Haven who had lost her husband at the battle of Brier Creek.

Mrs. Bidack, who seldom exchanged visits with the young widow, was not aware of Tryon's second invasion until he began to approach Norwalk. The terror of the inhabitants, many of whom were abandoning their homes, acquainted her with the disastrous state of affairs, and her eyes flashed fire when she exclaimed to the fugitives:

"You may go, if you wish; but two hundred such rascals as Governor Tryon cannot frighten Barbara Bidack one inch from her home! If the red-coated scoundrels enter my house he'll meet with a reception he'll never forget!"

More than once she was urged to fly, but disdained with a proud and defiant curl of the lip, and awaited with eagerness the arrival of the invaders.

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DR. WILLIAM MASON TURNER'S

Great Story of the Coal Hills,

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will soon be given in these pages. It is a story of great power and of fascinating interest, told with an intensity of narrative style that commands a deep attention. The masked coal-digger is a mystery, to unravel whose identity, and the secret of his hiding away in

THE UNDERGROUND WORLD,

gives the author a plot of peculiar and novel originality, and sends a flood of light into the drear, dark chambers of the hills, where so many lives are coined into others' wealth and warmth.

Sunshine Papers.

Two Soliloquies.

MISS MARY—Waiting for the coming man.

"Oh, what a shocking evening! It is a wonderfully comforting matter to know that the world is never to be visited by it second deluge, or one would really grow nervous wondering if the time for it had not come. Goodness knows, this modern flood is bad enough! Here have I not been able to make a call, or take a promenade, for three whole days. Whatever did Mrs. Noah do to pass away time all through that rainy period, I wonder? Though, to be sure, my speculations had better concern what shall I do to kill time this evening! I shall not have any visitors, that's certain! There's not enough milk of human kindness in the world to prompt any one to venture out in this storm, even if they do suspect a fellow-mortals dying of ennui. Hieh! I believe I'll look up Cora Vintonne's last letter, and answer it. What a goose girl made of herself to marry Vintonne—such a plain, old-fashioned fellow as he was! Though, to be sure, she *seems* happy enough. Ah, here is her letter. It was written—the tenth of September.

"The tenth of September! Two months ago: no more, for this is the—can it be possible?—the sixteenth. How time *does* fly; and the sixteenth of next month will be my birthday, and I shall be twenty-six! Oh, goodness! The very thought makes me shiver. Twenty-six and not married! I'm not homely, and I always dress stylishly. I can not understand why I should not be nicely settled. There was Ralph Day I might have had, I suppose; he was deeply enough in love. But he was too poor to be thought of. Not that every girl can marry a millionaire; and I, for one, don't expect to. But I do expect and intend to marry a man who can give me a pleasant home, and money enough to keep up stylish appearances. There was Will Earle seemed quite devoted at one time, but I let him drop. He was too afraid of spending his money. What girl wants a lover who cannot take her to stylish places, and in a stylish manner, and allow his devotion to betray itself in pleasant offerings? My husband must be at least moderately rich, nobby and generous. But, twenty-six! I wish he would hurry and come along! What if I should have to marry some poor chap and settle down into a plodding, economical wife, just to save myself from being an old maid? But I will not so there! Strange that when I have such a large circle of acquaintances, no gentleman pays me steady attentions. But I'm thankful I'm not the only girl in the same position. I know plenty who are no nearer getting a husband than I. And it's very odd! Somehow the young men do not seem to care anything about getting married, now-a-days; and why not, I'm sure I cannot understand!"

MR. JOHN—Why he does not come.

"Great Caesar! How it rains! Ugh! catch a fellow going out-to-night! And this is comfortable. Mrs. Smith certainly is a commendable landlady. This grate fire seems doubly cheerful on such a dismal night, and altogether I have a very cosy establishment here. If only I had a dear little wife in it! I wonder if she would like me in this dressing-gown? It is not especially stylish, but deuced comfortable. For a cigar! Thinking of marrying, I might as well make up my mind whether it is or isn't to be, to quote Shakespeare loosely. Somehow, I cannot quite agree with the boys, that bachelor life is the only one to live. Though they do maintain that they cannot afford to marry. There's Ed. Hawley and Curt Williams; if they cannot afford to marry, how the dickens care I, who get less by a thousand than they? But it does seem as if one ought to be able to marry nicely on seventeen hundred. There is Mary Dalrymple has certainly made an impression on me, and I might as well set this peculiar feeling I have about her at rest, by determining once for all whether I'll try to deepen the impression or eradicate it.

"Let me see! If I call on Miss Dalrymple this week I must ask her if she would like to attend the opera. Of course she'll say yes. There will be tickets, supper, a carriage, opera-book and the little extras—fifteen dollars gone plump. More than a week's board! The next week it will be a play, or a concert, or a lecture—not so likely to be that, though—young ladies are not over fond of lectures—tickets and carriage and supper again; for if a fellow doesn't take a young lady out in style she thinks he is mean; and if he did not ask her to take refreshments she'd book him on the spot as a barbarian to be tabooed as unfit for civilized society. Curt and Ed may well say it costs something to court a young lady. Then, whenever I called I should have to take along a box of choice confections, or a basket of fruit, or a bouquet of flowers, and occasionally a new book. And if she wanted me to escort her to parties, there would be more

flowers expected. Then there's the holiday and birthday gifts, the diamond ring, and future costly gifts! Great Caesar! but the undertaking does look formidable when its items are piled together! Suppose I waited on her three months and then got my *conge*. Shouldn't I be tempted to swear like fun at the fool I should have made of myself? And if I wait on her six months and marry her, I shall have spent more on her, every week, than it costs to live comfortably, take plenty of enjoyment, and smoke no end of cigars. And then there would have to be a more stylish boarding-place looked up; for a lady would not consider decent what a gentleman is quite content with. And Curt says young couples *must* board, unless they can move from the altar into a newly-furnished brown-stone! And then, there's the dress!

"Ah, well, Miss Mary, you must not haunt my heart any longer! It is evident I'm not able to marry you; for a fellow must either be set down as mean, or he must spend all his salary to woo you, and then have nothing saved up toward maintaining you in the manner you desire.

"The boys are right, after all. One can get along without a wife until he is forty or so, and lead a very jolly bachelor life on a medium salary. And if men get selfish and indifferent to the charms of a home by that time, and so do not marry at all, why who is to blame but the women?"

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

PERSONAL.—The *Iowa State Register*, chronicling the arrival of "The Iowa Novelist," in Des Moines, takes occasion to say:

"Mr. Coomes has coined the production of his fertile brain into many broad acres, and is one of the most extensive farmers in the State, as well as a citizen of estimable worth."

A worthy tribute to our popular contributor, whose superb serial stories of Western Life are written exclusively for the SATURDAY JOURNAL.

We learn by note from Mr. Coomes that he is to be found during the Centennial Exhibition, in Philadelphia, at the Granger's Department. All the thousands of readers of the JOURNAL who would like to shake the author's hand will there find him as one of Iowa's representatives.

Mr. Coomes' new romance, "Prairie Paul," will not be long in "coming to the front." It reintroduces and finishes up the famous "triangle" of old DAKOTA DAN, one of the oddest and most thoroughly enjoyable characters we come across in American literature since Old Nick Whiffles made a name and fame.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS HENCE.

WHAT will have happened between the Centennial of 1876 and 1976? Will there be any cases of scandal to startle the world, and, if so, who will be the ones to be scandalized, and what for? Or, will scandal trials become so common that people will look for them as naturally as they do now for their morning paper or daily bread and butter, and growl because the accounts are not graphic enough and the revelations are not low and vulgar enough to suit their *morbid* tastes? Or will the world become so pure that no spot or taint will rest upon any one, that people will look more to the goodness than to the evil in human character?

Will women have attained their *rights* and now less inclination to wander forth and seek amusement away from the homestead be made manifest? Will home comforts and home enjoyments be the rule and not the exception? Will fashion tyrannize over the men and women of the future more or less than it does now? Will society and gay life be as fascinating as to wean the coming generation from home and loved ones?

Will there be agitation for a "third term," or "Tammany Rings," or spelling-schools and other necessities of life?

Will the stream of intemperance flow on as it does now and engulf many noble minds and natures, who would have been ornaments to society but for its baseless influence, or will the tide be stopped, and the folly of leveling oneself to an equality with the beast be seen, and, instead of low, drunken creatures, will there be a higher type of manhood and womanhood? Will men find more society in the good and pure than in the vile and bad? Will the cup of pure water give place to the wine of the inebriate?

Will the people be a hardier, stronger, healthier and more rugged set than they are now? Will they dress themselves with medicines, wear thin boots in wet weather, or cord their waists into unhealthy tightness?

Which will reign in the world—brains or money? Will "All men are born free and equal" be as much *quoted* as it is *acted* up to as in the present day?

Will lovers talk and chatter the same nonsense as now? Will their love affairs run more smoothly, and have no bickerings or jealousies to contend with? If these little annoyances are left out of the programme, will there be as much pleasure in the wooing as there seems to be at present? Will the old folks, who are not even born yet, sit in the corner and grumble at the degeneracy of the times?

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FAME.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD,
Author of "Silver Threads Among the Gold."

Once I knew an aged poet,
Old with work and want and care,
And the fame he sighed and toiled for
Never came to make life fair.
And his heart grew starved and hungry
As the hearts of mortals can,
For some sign of approbation
From his selfish fellow-man.

And he died, but when he slumbered,
Caring nothing more for fame,
All the world began to seek his name,
And the tomb a tomb of marble,
His low resting-place above,
Shutting out the rain and sunshine
And the flowers loves.

Yesterday, as I was going,
Slowly down the crowded street
More than once I heard some children
A sweet verse of his repeat.
And I wondered which were true
Tribute to the poet dead?
Stately tomb of heart-coal marble
Or the words the children said?

The Men of '76.

Benedict Arnold.

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND.

The associate of brave men in the early years of the Revolutionary struggle, and made glorious by many a deed of daring, all were suddenly eclipsed by an act so infamous that to all time Benedict Arnold will be the term to imply the utmost depth of perfidy and treachery. With a sense of loathing the American recalls the memory of the man; yet of all the men of '76 his life-record stands pre-eminent for its moral—the awful penalty which is sure to visit him who betrays his country. Vast indeed must have been the crime, stupendous the fall, when Washington had to say:

"Arnold's conduct is so villainously perfidious that there are no terms that can describe the baseness of his heart."

And when he had to add:

"The confidence and folly which have marked the subsequent career of this man are of a piece with his villainy, and all three are perfect in their kind."

He expressed what time has fully confirmed; and to-day it may be said that history furnishes no nearer parallel to Lucifer's fall than Arnold's treason brought upon himself.

Benedict Arnold was born in Norwich, Conn., January 3d, 1740. Even in early youth he betrayed the man. He was cruel. He would rob birds' nests, and tear the young birds in pieces to enjoy the cries of the old birds. He would strew finely-powdered glass and the broken vials from the drug store, in which he was early an apprentice, on the ground and in the grass where the barefooted school children played, to enjoy their suffering and terror at their bleeding feet. He would flog and fight other boys for the mere enjoyment of fighting. He participated in any and every rash escapade or adventure which the ingenuity of a fertile genius for mischief could invent. He appeared to know no fear, and the stories relate of his feats and exploits savor of the marvelous.

Coming to young manhood he went to sea, and engaging in a half-contraband trade with the West India islands, he found the excitement of that adventurous life quite to his taste. He fought a duel in one island—he almost killed a sailor in a brawl, in another island—he traded, trafficed and roved around the seas like a restless spirit, who, had piracy been possible, would have been a rival of Morgan and Laflite.

This restless spirit was among the first to answer the call to arms. The crack of musketry at Concord was music to his ears, and, as the wild excitement grew, it drew to the front the belligerent Benedict Arnold, who, ready for the most dangerous service, was commissioned a Colonel of Militia, and given command of Connecticut troops dispatched to capture Ticonderoga. He hastened forward, at the head of a regiment of wild spirits, to find Ethan Allen with his Green Mountain boys there before him, but, after a bitter quarrel with the daring Vermonters, he participated equally in the assault upon the noted fortress (May 10th, 1775), and after its capture pursued the enemy on the lake (Champlain) with such tireless activity that that whole region, for a season, was awed into submission to the patriot cause.

But trouble followed. Between the rough, but honest Ethan Allen, and the utterly reckless, irresponsible and unprincipled Arnold there was no harmony, and it ended in the withdrawal of the latter from his command, and he proceeded to Cambridge, where Washington's headquarters then were, and sought for service. Just such a spirit as Arnold was wanted. The conquest of Canada having been conceived, now that Ticonderoga was wrested from the English, involved the capture of Quebec, by the dispatch, through the woods of Maine, of one column, to be joined, before that famous stronghold, by a second column, which should first capture Montreal, and then drop down to the Canadian capital, to conjoin forces and carry Quebec by storm. Arnold was the very man, apparently, for the work, and he was given the command of the Maine movement, while the brave Montgomery led the corps against Montreal.

The story of that expedition up the Kennebec and then through the wild forest, in the inclement fall of 1775, is hardly possible for pen to narrate. So much suffering, so many obstacles to overcome, so much to discourage and break down the men, it seems incredible it was ever undertaken, and incredible that five hundred out of eleven hundred should have continued on, to appear before the astounded people and troops of Quebec late in November.

Montgomery came down from above and joined Arnold, and on the last day of the year, at night, the assault was made, which ended in Montgomery's death and Arnold's defeat after desperate valor and a severe wound. With a remnant of his troops he remained to maintain the siege of Quebec, until May, 1776, when he was superseded in command by General Brown, by whom the conquest of Canada was suddenly abandoned May 5th.

Arnold, for three years after, made a brilliant record of field service, but all was clouded by his personal unpopularity. Turbulently fierce in anger, insolent, with bad principles, and integrity that none trusted, his most splendid deeds scarcely sufficed to make him respected. With superiors he was jealous, capacious, quarrelsome; to inferiors dogmatic, insolent, cruel. But the service so needed his unconquerable will, his matchless courage, his readiness for any enterprise, that he was given important command.

On Lake Champlain, in the summer of 1776, he had a series of water conflicts, than which

nothing in our naval warfare is more remarkable for personal prowess. Says a historian:

"The admirers of Arnold have a right to refer with pleasure to that bright period of his life which dates from the evacuation of Canada, in 1776, to the battle of Bemus Heights, in October, 1777. It was crowded with exploits of romantic courage—some of them so desperately daring as to justify a doubt whether, in the excitement of the battlefield, Arnold was a sane man. This was eminently the case in his final exploit at Saratoga."

That "final exploit" was at the second day's battle. He rushed to the very front of the charging columns, right between the two fires, where his escape from death was a marvel. He escaped with a wound in the leg which lamed him for life, and Congress, which had been very slow to advance him, owing to his distrust of his personal character, came forward with its admission of merit by voting him the commission of Major-General, dating from Burgoyne's surrender, to which he so signalized contributed.

From that time he saw no service, until placed in command in Philadelphia, upon its evacuation by the British, June 17th, 1778. He had married, a short time previous, Margaret Shippen, daughter of a noted disloyal physician of the Quaker City, and, having powerful influence brought to bear, had the city given to his keeping.

It was a most important assignment, and his rascality in promoting his own pecuniary interests was soon aggravated by his affiliating with an anti-republican faction to an extent which made him very offensive to every good patriot—so offensive that finally he was brought to trial, and in the fall of 1778, was deprived of his command and stigmatized by the public voice, if not by the court-martial which adjudged to a "reprimand," as an unworthy and dishonorable public servant.

Furious and insolent, he hurled anathema against upon men in high and low places. His extravagance in living had deeply involved him in debt, and he was reduced to the verge of distraction. No employ which the government could give could extricate him from his embarrassment; and then was conceived the terrible and wholly infamous scheme of *selling himself to the enemy of his country*.

A correspondence was opened with Major Andre, a member of Sir Henry Clinton's staff and an old acquaintance of the Shippen family. A refugee minister, named Odell, acted as the medium of communication. Slowly the two correspondents, under guise of a commercial transaction, unfolded the scheme and discussed the terms. Clinton, cognizant of all that passed, did not admit Arnold's money value, but suggested that, if the American general would secure to him some valuable post, then a price could be fixed.

This culminated in Arnold's efforts to get possession of West Point, and so powerfully did his few friends, in and out of Congress, work, that (August 3d, 1780) Washington assigned him to the command of the West Point and surrounding garrisons.

Then the work of treason rapidly developed, and finally Arnold appointed Sept. 20th for an interview with Andre and Col. Beverly Robinson, to consummate the arrangements by an interview on board a British sloop of war, lying in the Hudson, off Dobb's Ferry. But Arnold did not venture to visit the vessel, and that night sent his messengers to the sloop of war, with directions for Andre to meet him ashore. This Andre did, and the conspirators held a long interview in the dense underwood at the foot of Clove Mountain, on the west side of the Hudson.

So protracted was this conference that day-light compelled the boatmen to withdraw, and Andre was taken to the house of Joshua H. Smith, Arnold's confidant and messenger to the sloop of war. Andre and Arnold remained at Smith's house during all the day of the 20th Sept.

Annoyed by the shore guns, the sloop of war had to drop down stream, and this compelled Andre to proceed to New York by land. Smith bore him across the river to Verplanck's Point, and from thence, protected by a pass from Arnold, "Mr. John Anderson" started for New York.

How I was arrested on the 23d, by three Americans, near Tarrytown—how in his stock-rooms were found all the papers which laid bare the whole astounding scheme—how Arnold was apprised of this arrest when entertaining Washington's aids at breakfast, while Washington was expected every moment—how he traitor, excusing himself from his guests, went down to the river, and calling his barge, pulled off down to the British sloop of war, and thus escaped—how Washington and his generals, not apprised of the monstrous plot, by prompt action saved the posts from any surprise or betrayal—how Andre was tried and condemned, and was executed Oct. 2d, 1780, as a spy, although Clinton made every effort to save him, and Arnold also interposed by himself assuming all the responsibility of the spy's acts; those exciting and momentous acts form a long chapter in American history, which few can peruse without a sense of pity, pain and admiration for the gallant Andre, and of execration for the monster-villain whose treachery came so very near to success.

Arnold's after career was consistent with his wholly unprincipled character. He first issued an "Address" to the people of America, justifying his perfidious course by avowing the king of Great Britain to be the righteous authority, etc. This address, especially designed to foment insurrection among the American troops, was accompanied by a proclamation of Clinton, inviting desertion and abandonment of the patriot cause; but both were received with scorn and execration.

The traitor, as the price of his villainy, was to receive thirty thousand pounds sterling, in money, and the commission of brigadier-general in the British army. Acting under this commission, he led expeditionary corps into Virginia and Connecticut, burning and devastating as he passed. The town of New London, in his own native State, he reduced to ashes. Clinton abhorred such war, and the whole British army so detested the man for his treason, that he soon was virtually retired from the service, and the world knew no more of him as an officer.

As a man, he everywhere was treated with aversion or downright insult, and was literally driven, by the force of public opinion, to abandon England. He lived for awhile in Nova Scotia; thence, trading with the West Indies, he was captured by the French, but escaped, and again returned to England—leading a very retired life, and dying at Gloucester Place, in London, June 14th, 1801.

An old preacher, who had several calls to take a parish, asked his servant where he should go, and the servant said: "Go where there is most sin, sir." The preacher concluded that was good advice, and went where there was most money.

A True Knight:
OR,
TRUST HER NOT.

BY MARGARET LEICESTER.

CHAPTER V.
A MAN'S HATE.

THE burial of Mrs. Stanley was over now; she was lying quiet in the cold mausoleum at Greenwood, with the sun or the snow drifting in through the gilded bars, a cold house for a heart that had always beat warmly to every kind and tender emotion until now!

The house she had left had got back its old looks, now that her cold presence was out of it; the crane was off the door-handle, the blinds were drawn up, the footstep of the inmates were no longer hushed, nor their voices subdued.

Her interment had been a magnificent pageant; and long and glittering was the line of carriages which had followed her to her tomb; distinguished had been the assembly, and many a notable name was inscribed in the roll of mourners, for Paul Stanley was a celebrated man, and his wife had been a fashionable beauty. Some humble mourners, too, fringed the outside of the illustrious throng, stretching their gaunt necks and straining their hollow eyes to get a glimpse of the velvet-draped casket which contained her who had, many a time, spoken sweet words to them, and done kind acts for them, which were inscribed on their forlorn hearts in letters never fading.

The bereaved husband performed his part in the ceremonial with great grace and propriety; he was noticeably pale; sunk in profound grief, and never once lifted his eyes or seemed to be aware of the presence of any one around him.

"Perfectly stunned, poor fellow!" said his friends, as they sauntered back to their usual avocations. "It must be a frightful thing for a man of his exquisite sensibilities to realize that he actually was the cause of her death. Heaven have mercy on us! I shouldn't wonder if he should turn melancholy mad!"

The object of their compassion returned from the funeral of his wife, and threw himself in his easy-chair beside his study fire. The color had not returned to his tawny cheek, and he looked uneasily around him, as if he felt some evil presence in the room.

"Well, well; she's gone," at last said he, rising and taking a cigar from its case, "and an eternity of regrets will never bring her back. I believe she loved me to the end, too," he said, half groaning. "Oh, Rosa! Rosa! Rosa!"

He flung down the cigar, and going to a little ebony and silver cabinet, brought forth a decanter of brandy, and was about to mix himself a tumbler of it, when a grizzly thought assailed him, and he set it down hastily, and turned away with his hand to his eyes, faltering:

"If I hadn't been too fond of this and the like of this, I would never have committed that fatal blunder. I've half a mind to think this out seriously." He sat down with his head between his hands, and so remained, moody and motionless, until a servant, opening the door, ushered in a gentleman, announcing him as Mr. Falcon, solicitor.

Stanley started as his eye fell on the stranger—a smooth, pale, obsequious little man, with a bland but wrinkled smile, and an ever-ready bow; but he recovered himself instantly, and rose with a civil though distant salutation:

"Take a chair, Mr. Falcon," said he, waving him into one opposite his own; "you will find me anything but good company, I fear."

"I should not have intruded, sir," said Mr. Falcon, with a bow, while the piercing gray eyes fixed themselves upon the face of his host like burning-glasses, "but I have business to perform—business connected with your late wife's property."

Stanley returned his look steadily, but made no reply beyond a slight inclination.

"Six weeks ago," continued Mr. Falcon, "I had the honor of drawing up the late Mrs. Stanley's will." He paused, with the usual smile and bow, while Stanley gazed at him with hardening eye, and the dark blood mounting to his forehead.

"This is all new to me, Mr. Falcon," said he, grimly. "You certainly astonish me."

Mr. Falcon made no reply to that, save customary obeisance, but went on in a professionally subdued tone:

"Mrs. Stanley, on that occasion, did me the honor of showing me where she intended to keep her will, and of requesting me to seal the seal receptacle immediately upon my knowledge of her decease—sudden or otherwise."

"Did she intend to take the liberty of bringing order to her will?" asked Mr. Falcon.

"She did not," replied Stanley, between his teeth; "she left it, I presume, for you to make."

George again turned hastily aside, almost overcome by the revulsion of feeling. This is all I can say on this subject, Mr. Stanley," he said.

"It is nothing to the purpose whether I know or do not know the contents of the will," said George, turning to him a pale and anxious face. "It was the result of a mere accident that Mrs. Stanley ever mentioned to me that she intended to make her will, and, if you please, I would rather not pursue the subject further, at least until you have answered me one question. Did Mrs. Stanley make any especial statement to you on the night of her death?"

Stanley whitened to the lips.

"I know," answered he, still in that low, vibrating voice of chained-up fury, "I know that she and you had agreed between you that some statement was to be made to me."

He paused, malignantly waiting for George to offer some assent or dissent to this; but George moved not a muscle.

"I know this," reiterated Stanley, with a little bitter laugh, "because she told me so."

"Did she make the statement?" inquired George, with intense excitement.

"She did not," replied Stanley, between his teeth; "she left it, I presume, for you to make."

George again turned hastily aside, almost overcome by the revulsion of feeling. This is all I can say on this subject, Mr. Stanley," he said.

"It is nothing to say—no confidence to give, because I never had anything to do with Mrs. Stanley's affairs; at least, I became aware of some of them accidentally; but she never empowered me to act for her in any way. This is all I can say on this subject, Mr. Stanley."

"You absolutely refuse to impart to me what you have to do with this matter?"

"I am obliged absolutely to refuse," returned George.

"Very good, sir!" said Paul Stanley, stepping back with clenched hands, while a blaze of frantic hatred lit his eyes; "you've said all that is necessary. I understand our relative positions. Henceforward, if you are not as rash as you are impudent, you will keep out of my way!"

George started as if stung, and creasing his handsome head, gazed at his adversary in burning anger.

"Gentlemen! gentlemen!" said the soft, smooth voice of Mr. Falcon, as he stepped between them with a little bow and smile, "this is all nonsense; let us go back to business. Mr. Stanley, will you be good enough to assist me in a thorough search through the late Mrs. Stanley's effects for the missing document?"

While he was speaking, George, with a slight bow, left the room, and a few minutes after the house, crossing its threshold for the last time.

"Mr. Laurie," said Mr. Falcon, in his smoothest, most deferential tone, "be good enough to draw your chair close to the table; there are portions of this document which it is unnecessary for any one to hear except Mr. Stanley and yourself."

A visible tremor ran through Stanley from head to foot; he bit his lip fiercely, but he took no heed of the young man, as he slowly and reluctantly obeyed the lawyer's invitation and sat down close to the little desk.

Mr. Falcon turned the key, opened the desk, removed from it the loose papers, and finding the spring of a secret drawer, pulled it out.

All three, looking in at once, uttered a simultaneous exclamation.

The secret drawer was empty!

A flash of triumph broke from Stanley's eyes; utter astonishment sat on George's face; but the lawyer turned scarlet with mortification—then, white with wrath.

"Foul play!" cried he, in a voice that rung through the room, and startled everybody to their feet like the report of a pistol. "Foul play, I say! The will is stolen!"

Stanley turned upon him with a look which might have scorched him up.

"Sir, you exceed your office," said he.

That cool, crushing tone of superiority brought Mr. Falcon's wife back to him. In a moment he was his own man again, executing his most deprecatory bow and smile.

"My dear sir, you are right," said he; "let us stick to business. The will was here; it must be here still; we may find it among

finesse; yet she clung all the while to Mr. Verne with a timorous, retiring air; as if, half afraid of the younger gentleman, she felt truly happy and safe with the old, so that Mr. Verne, full of wonder and admiration, could not see an inch beyond the pretty Parisienne.

They arrived at the beach, and stood a moment the sunset crimsoning their faces—to drink in the crisp sand breeze and revel in the mystic peace of the noble sea-scene.

Maiblume, drawing a long breath, said at length:

"Oh, that this could last forever!"

Stanley and Laurie turned simultaneously to her, each with eager attention; but she looked at neither, seemingly forgetful of all save the broad, glistening expanse with its trailing fringe of foam at their feet.

"Monsieur Papa," cried Coila, nestling up to him. "I want somebody to repeat a poem about the sea; and somebody else to go out to the rocks over there and pluck me some dulse; and I want both my desires gratified at once. Monsieur, my dear papa, will you not direct the kind gentlemen to obey?"

"By all means, my dear child," laughed Mr. Verne. "Which do you wish to send dulse-gathering?"

"A thousand thanks!" cried Coila, with her most delicious lisp. "Monsieur George knows the rocks by heart—and so does Monsieur Stanley the poem; behold, then! And Maiblume will applaud the poem while I eat the dulse so briny, so delicate!"

With a smile at her saucy grace George started on his errand, while Mr. Stanley drew a sudden breath of relief, and well pleased with the part assigned him, dived into the stores of his mind for some poem worthy of the theme and of his charming audience.

Just then Coila uttered a little petulant cry.

"Maiblume!"

"What, my dear Coila?"

"Monsieur George—he knows not dulse from eel-grass!"

"Ah! that's fatal. Recall him."

"But you know every fairy seed that waves from ocean rock. Maiblume, sweet life, do you accompany him?"

"Cool request, was it not?"

And, utterly unconscious of the poet's freezing stare, and Maiblume's gasp and burning blush, the little singleton urged it persistently.

"Go, Maiblume," said Mr. Verne, laughing heartily; "the poem can await your return."

"May I accompany?" almost pleaded Stanley.

Maiblume only waved her hand in stately dissent, and with a quiet step followed George down the level sands.

Anon he glanced behind, and seeing her coming hastened back to her with glad smiles.

"You are coming to help me, are you?" cried he, gayly; "thanks; it is a much better arrangement than mademoiselle's."

"This too is mademoiselle's," observed Maiblume, her deep, sweet eyes on the ground.

Side by side over the firm, wet sand, while the gentle wavelets crept up to kiss their feet, and ran back laughing to whisper in old Ocean's ear of a tale as eternal as the song he sings; side by side, while myriads of white sand birds started up from before them and circled around them, merrily chattering their congratulations; side by side, while the wild roses leaned low from their ledge above, and the honeysuckle sent down its streamers of triumph to bless and greet them on their way, and even the grim face of the sea-washed rock seemed flushed with kindly sympathy!

Oh, she was beautiful, this Maiblume!

"Miss Maiblume, you wished that this might always last," said George, in a hushed voice.

"Are you then so very happy here?"

"Very happy," answered Maiblume, softly; "very happy and at rest."

"May you always be so!" said George, with sudden fervent passion. "May no blighting shadow ever fall across your path!"

He spoke with such unexpected energy that she turned quickly, and, seeing him pale and agitated, exclaimed, hurriedly:

"George, what is the matter? What do you fear for me?"

"Don't ask me, dear Miss Maiblume," faltered he. "I have no right to speak to you on such a subject."

"You have a right," cried she. "Have we not always been like brother and sister? Have we not always been the frankest of friends toward each other? Dear George, don't let us misunderstand each other now! I value your friendship beyond words—and—and—your sympathy."

As she finished in a tone vibrating with a strange, sweet emotion, she gave him her velvet hand. Its touch set all his being thrilling with a bitter-sweet pain, and as he clasped it close, his heart swelled and swelled and tears rushed into his eyes.

For oh, he loved her with that deepest and truest of loves—the first-born!

A rugged column of weed-swathed rock screened them from the eyes of those they had left behind; a tongue of rough stones ran outward from before them, into which the sea swirled its pallid froth and glistening brown wave; not a soul was in sight.

"Have I a right to disturb your peace with my ungenerous fears?" said George, trembling; "will it be any proof of the—the affection I have always had for you, to trouble and perplex you with my undefined suspicions concerning one whom you seem to hold dear?"

"Wait a moment!" exclaimed Maiblume, gazing up in his agitated face with wonder in her own; "you speak most strangely. To whom do you allude?"

"He is not worthy of you, Miss Maiblume!" burst passionately from George while the maiden started and her sweet brow clouded warningly. "You say I have a right to speak—then I will speak! He is as far beneath you as this mass of lifeless pulp is beneath yonder pure light!" and he pointed at the tremulous evening star, while he spurned a starfish from the dry stone at his foot.

A moment's deep pause, then she lifted her great, magnetic eyes full to his.

"George," breathed the low voice, which was all music to his heart, "never mention me again. Don't fear for me; I could not love him even if he asked me, and he never has."

"Thank you! thank you!" faltered George, turning very pale, for this was not what his boding fears had prophesied; and he pressed her two flower-soft hands within his with unconscious strength, and his pulses quickened wildly, and his knitting eyes dwelt upon her so burningly, that little by little her rare, cold beauty warmed and glowed into rich, pulsating life; her proud eyes drooped; her sumptuous bosom rose and fell with half-gasping sighs; she sought in fluttering uncertainty to release herself—and even while she averted her tell-tale face, her treacherous heart melted, and she leaned more and more upon him!

Another moment and she would have melted wholly and yielded to the luring spell of the youth's first wordless declaration of love; but, like a sprite from some eerie land, a strange boy-figure came out of the shadowy

cags behind them and lifted up his wan, unearthly visage with a sudden cry.

"My God!" muttered George Laurie, hoarsely, and he started from Maiblume's side as if shot.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 313.)

RESPONSE TO "DOLOROSO."

BY JOHN GOSSIP.

This is the song of the soul that waits on the hither side of the Golden Gates: Forevermore, dear own, to thee My arms are outstretched yearningly; For evermore I long to see My darling's eyes look down on me; Pray, O God, I pray, Bring back to me that joyous day When death seemed further than the sky, And love, we vowed, should never die; When clasping palms and pressed hearts, We see, are cast at darts;

Content to know that whatsoe'er, Love's foemen could not steal our flame; Content to feel that unto death Our breath should be each other's breath!

Oh, song so sad and sweetly sung! Yield solace to the soul that sings; So that, when others' knells are rung, They may not feel, as he, their stings;

Teach hearts who hear thee that afar Forever rings thy broken strain;

And that beyond the Upper Bar Dwells she who sings thy sweet refrain!

BATTLING WITH THE UNSEEN.

BY MRS. MARY REED CROWELL, AUTHOR OF "TWO GIRLS' LIVES," "LOVE-BLIND," "OATH-BOUND," "BARBARA'S FATE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE GRAVE BETWEEN THEM.

suffering; and, with a throb of gasping, almost deathly agony, as she took in, in one comprehensive sweep of thought, the depth, heinousness and malignancy of the wrong Frank Havelstock had done her, without cause or provocation, every tender memory of the man who had been to her, once, all and in all, forever died in her, and in its place sprung up a repellent horror that time only increased as the days went on.

But, with all these tumults raging in her, she gave no outward sign, made not a moan beyond that one gasp of mortal pain when she severed the last bond to her other life. She lay in among the pillows, like a crushed flower, with wide open eyes, stony with desperate despair; with firm closed lips, on which no prayer formed, from which no complaint came.

She seemed paralyzed with a pain too acutely awful for any mode of expression; she just took all the content of the vials of wrath that her fate poured for her to drink, and in silence she drained to the bottommost dregs.

Very gradually the quieting draught gained ascendancy over her; her eyes lost their deliberate, despairing stare, her lids drooped slowly, until the dark, golden lashes lay motionless on her marble-white cheek, her hands lost their rigid clutch of the white lace ruff that fell over her wrists, and the sharp lines of her figure, that had looked like the thrillingly awful shape of a dead body, relaxed into us all usual graceful curves and lifelikeness.

Her sleep was dreamless, deep and long. Mrs. Argelyne had stolen in silently several times to report to Leslie, who paced the library floor in an impatient suspense, that refused, at length, to be content with his aunt's reports.

"I am going up myself, aunt Helen. Why should I not when my own darling wife is there, alone with her mysterious illness?"

He went softly up stairs alone, and turned the handle of Ethel's door with cautious care, and then crossed quickly, noiselessly to the bed-side.

He leaned over her in an inexpressibly tender way, with his loving, pitying gaze bent on the sweet, unconscious face in a silent devotion.

He touched her hand as a devotee would touch a shrine, reverently, adoringly. He caressed her hair, that was flowing over the pillow, down one of her beautifully curved shoulders, with a touch so light and soft that the faintest slumber would not have been disturbed by it, much less the deathly deep sleep that held Ethel as in a trance.

"I am little darling—my little wife! How my life suffered—just see the purple circles under her eyes, and the white line around her mouth. Poor, precious one!"

He said it to himself in a low, caressing tone, as he looked yearningly at her, while gently patting her hand, that lay lifeless and motionless on the silken coverlid.

"I wonder what ailed her? has she heart disease? God forbid! it will kill me if I see her suffer like this often. Can it have been occasioned only by the natural excitement of our marriage, as aunt Helen insists? I think not—Ethel is a girl of wonderful coolness and control, and surely in our peculiarly quiet wedding there was nothing to create undue nervous excitement."

His thoughts were visible in the pained anxiety on his fine face as he bent nearer his wife's still, beautiful figure. Her breathing was so light, even, that he could barely detect it, and he leaned his ears against her lips as if afraid she were not breathing at all.

"If she should die! oh, my darling!"

He knelt beside her then, in an almost frenzied impulse of sorrow, burying his face on the white, tender, quivering body; while heavy, passionate sobs shook his frame.

"It would kill me to lose her, when I have only just found her; when I've waited so long for her—my own, own darling! Can it be she is dying—she is so still, so white?"

He raised his eyes, that were red with weeping, to look at her, with a yearning, passionate look that showed how completely he had merged his whole happiness in her keeping.

As he watched her he grew calmer; he stood silently beside her with folded arms and sad, wistful eyes.

"There would be but one thing worse than that—her death—and that is—to learn the cause of all this mysterious illness, this plainly visible suffering of mind and body, was that she regretted our marriage upon realizing she was of a verity my wife. Can that be the reason? Oh! my God—can I have stumbled upon the secret of her indisposition?"

The perspiration started on his forehead and palms at the sudden thought, and a swift horror surged over his face.

But only for a moment; then he smiled tenderly, pityingly upon her.

"I am beside myself—forgive me, my darling! and may God spare you to me, to let me make you so happy and content that I will be all the world to you! God help me to be more worthy of you, my peerless one, my own!"

He stooped and kissed her lips in reverent worship, then went out, quietly, with a prayer in his heart and the touch of her sweet mouth lingering on his lips. Went from Ethel's presence with no foreboding of the weary, heart-sick days, the sleepless, watchful nights that were doomed to intervene before he saw her sweet suffering face again.

CHAPTER XLVI.

"ONLY A SUGGESTION."

GEORGIA's life at Tanglewood had at length settled into that pitiful, dead level existence that crushes every feeling, restraining every emotion, and makes the act of existing a mere monotonous passivity.

She had suffered to the fullest limit of her capacity; she had drained her vials of wrath to their bitterest sediment; she had endured all the force of tempest after tempest, and yet lived.

Because she did not die, Georgia had come to dread nothing. Because she had nothing more to dread, she had nothing to hope; and when there comes into a woman's life any fatality that is strong enough to quench the fires of hope, to the tiniest smoldering spark, as in Georgia's case—then God help her to bear the burden of living!

The rigid etiquette of Tanglewood was maintained with pompous regularity. Dinner was served to Georgia and Lexington alone with as much style and ceremony as if the most distinguished character had dined with them.

As she lay there, gradually yielding to the draught of salina Mrs. Argelyne had bade her take, she knew, with a feeling that was a species of cause—she, who had loved him so!

It had been well done. Havelstock had rid himself of her, for what she could form no idea; and she, emerging from her sorrow and trouble, had just learned to be happy again, only to meet, face to face, a horror she had never imagined before her in real life.

The rigid etiquette of Tanglewood was maintained with pompous regularity. Dinner was served to Georgia and Lexington alone with as much style and ceremony as if the most distinguished character had dined with them.

Lexington dressed with precise elegance, and expected Georgia to present herself in full dinner toilet. Before the solemn, liveried butler and his corps of well-drilled waiters, the

widely-separated pair maintained a light, gossipy chat; and when left to themselves, over their walnuts and Johansberger, not the most argus-eyed eavesdropper would have found fault with manner or conversation.

It was a pitiful life—a horrid succession of more horrid mockeries; a mere existence that only needed a few weeks longer to culminate in a desperate tragedy—for very misery's sake.

Occasional guests came, and departed in silent ecstasies over their entertainment and entertainers; occasional calls were made by the handsome reserved pair who carried their family pride and hauteur so becomingly. There were the daily drives, which Lexington politely insisted upon; when he accompanied her, and conversed in his exquisite way on all possible points of interest. All through the winter, since the fateful night of the affair in the conservatory, there had been occasional entertainments in the neighborhood, to which Lexington had escorted his wife, and in turn they had given a series of amateur theatricals, concerts, readings and plays.

Through all the times Lexington preserved the same perfect courtesy, and Georgia the same quiet, graceful acceptance; while hourly the yawning chasm widened and deepened.

It was the very perfection of fearful mockery—their death-in-life; and the only actual perception Georgia found herself conscious of, was that sooner or later, in the natural course of human events, she would die—and so the end of it all would come.

In those darkest days, Amber was the one comfort of her life. To her alone, of all the wide world, could she pour out her whole heart's bitterness, and from her she invariably received a fresh courage that enabled her to endure a little longer.

"It must come out all right at last, Mrs. Lexington. I believe there are such happy days ahead for you that when you come to us we will admit they were cheaply bought, even by this apparently hopeless despair. Cheer up, Mrs. Lexington! I remember that no pure, innocent, suffering woman ever could, according to God's mercy, go down to death under the cloud of suspicion."

In after days, Georgia remembered Amber's words, and thanked God for giving her her faithful friend and counselor.

Into the midst of all this hopelessness there came a letter—only a few lines on heavy-tinted, perfumed, creased paper; only a hurriedly-written note from Ida, asking Georgia and her husband to come to her and her husband for the week promised them, in early April.

Only that—and yet it was the turning-point in more than one destiny; only that, and yet a more powerful influence over several lives could not have been imagined.

Georgia read it at the breakfast table and handed it to her husband, who glanced briefly over it.

"We will go, if we promised. There is Mrs. Argelyne also, to whom we are indebted. He always spoke so politely, and distantly, and in all their frigid intercourse since Ida's wedding night, the name of Carleton Vincy, or the subject of their wide estrangement had never been alluded to however remotely. Georgia had never seen Vincy or heard of him from December to April. She was perfectly indifferent on the subject, since he had brought his horror, and in her dull apathy she would not have cared if he had come daily. She had no more to dread now—nothing to hope—these were the words that sung like a knell in her crushed heart—never ceasing night or day."

This proposed visit to New York was powerless to excite the slightest pleasurable anticipation. She made her arrangements mechanically, supposing there would be operas to attend, theaters to visit, drives to take, friends to receive, calls to make—and further, there was nothing.

Amber packed her trunks with her elegant garments, while Georgia listlessly watched her; and then, one balmy day in April, when grass was springing greenly, and buds bursting from their calyxes in impetuous delight that the bland spring breezes had come to woo them from their hiding-places, Lexington and

THE AGENT;
OR,
THE WAY PEOPLE ARE INSURED.

BY JOE OT. JR.

A. Good day, Brown, it's nice weather out.
 B. Indeed, I'm too busy to see.
 A. I'm soliciting now for the "Life."
 B. Well, that doesn't matter to me!
 A. It's the very best company out.
 B. I'll never get in it, that's more.
 A. But surely you ought to insure.
 B. What's your rates to keep off a bore?
 A. Life is exceedingly short.
 B. I know it, I can't talk quite so long.
 A. Death will come up soon and it's more.
 B. If you hurry it up it is wrong.
 A. Our plan is entirely new.
 B. I've heard that before it's old.
 A. I explain you the whole thing at once.
 B. Well, I guess I don't want to be told.
 A. About what's your age, Mr. Brown?
 B. I've not passed the point of sense.
 A. The cost is all going to show.
 B. What's the difference you'd be going hence.
 A. What disease did your father die of?
 B. An attack of insurance galoots.
 A. Have you any perceptible complaint.
 B. Yes, the jerks and it gets in my boots.
 A. Now, pray, Mr. B., give me leave—
 B. That you could have taken before.
 A. I'd be pleased to show you our terms.
 B. I'll show you them at my door.
 A. Won't you take out a policy now?
 B. No, but I'll take out an agent right soon.
 A. Of course you were never insane.
 B. Well, I'm getting as mad as a loon.
 A. You have a good deal of health.
 B. And you have a good deal of cheek.
 A. I'm sure you would be a safe risk.
 B. You're risking yourself, so to speak.
 A. I'm not a good company kind.
 B. You'll leave your coat-tails by and by.
 A. Your breath any moment might cease.
 B. You carry an awful supply.
 A. Our losses are paid promptly up.
 B. Well, your time is now going to loss.
 A. I wish you'd go into this board.
 B. I wish you'd go out of this house.
 A. We agents are not to be bluffed.
 B. No, it's your insurance is sick.
 A. I'll have to death every day.
 B. Well, write me a policy quick!

The Black Shadow.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

"MAY I die if I ever prove false to you," repeated Lucrece.

It was less through love than fear of this dark-browed man, the very strength of whose passion terrified her, that the girl gave the promise he had required. But when, as now, the sternness dropped away from him, she was not disposed to quarrel with the fates which promised her such a husband.

"Mine," he said, with a thrill of joyousness in his voice. "Mine for weal or for woe. Mine for time, and, if such things be possible, for eternity too. It seems to me that love like mine must reach beyond the grave. Little Lucrece! it will seem long until I come to claim my own, and whatever comes meanwhile, remember the words you have said here on this day."

She was only sixteen, and there were five years of freedom before her—an eternity to sweet, undinking sixteen. But she turned pale and shivered as he repeated, with an almost fierce intensity:

"Remember—remember! Oh, shrinking little dove, it is with a faulty one of a faulty race that you have promised to wed, but, such as I am, with all my soul I love you. The Clandarrels are as entire in their loves as implacable in their hates; as generous toward truth as they are unforgiving with deceit, and I, the last of the Clandarrels, swear loyalty to you, my queen!"

It was very fine to be loved and wooed with such Quixotic fervor, though Lucrece would have been as well contented with less love and gentler wooing; but she was an obedient daughter, and Papa Trevor openly beamed his approval upon the result. Certain papers had come into Clandarrel's hands, representing claims to satisfy which would have swept the frail, showy fabric of the Trevor fortune to utter wreck, that need harass him no more.

Five years, even where bliss is deferred to the end of it, even when the two loving and longing hearts beat at the antipodes, are not an interminable time. It was over, but there had been changes meanwhile. Papa Trevor had passed forever from the scenes that once knew him, and Lucrece, standing in her lover's presence for the first time since their long separation, with a soft mournfulness in her fathomless eyes, and in low, sad tones, told him of her loss. Told him also that her father's available means had been accumulating, and that she was prepared to carry out the last wishes of the dead by canceling the long-standing obligation.

"There is nothing owing me," declared Clandarrel. "It is enough that he was your father. I will hunt up those old papers and put them on the fire. I would have done the same had he lived, believe me."

But as she insisted, Clandarrel yielded. He, however, made marriage settlements, giving her thrice the amount of the debt.

There was a wedding in one of the fashionable churches, attended by a fashionable throng, and as the line of carriages containing that select number who were to honor the wedding breakfast rolled up the avenue and discharged their occupants at Trevor House, one of those incidents occurred which serve to illustrate the extremes of this world.

As the bride alighted a woman suddenly pushed forward and stood by her side. Such a contrast! The first in her trailing robes of vestal white, a vision of angelic purity. The other a tattered presentment of abject misery, with death stamped in her look. But between the two, the bride and the outcast, there was a resemblance which struck upon every beholder.

They looked straight into each other's eyes for the briefest instant. A bluish ghastliness went over the face of the bride; then, with her hand still upon her husband's arm, she swept up the marble steps and in at the open portal.

The breakfast, the toasts, the stale jests rehashed for the occasion were over, the guests gone.

The bride was standing by a window of her chamber, her eyes, dilated wildly, fixed on the blank space before her. Suddenly she clutched her hands together and held her breath, listening. Some one entered. A step crossed the floor and paused near her. A voice spoke, her husband's:

"An incongruous visitor, that one of yours, Mrs. Clandarrel. Are you in the habit of receiving many such? Really, your charity does you honor. I saw you draw your pure robes away that you might not be contaminated by that wreck of womanhood; an eminently proper proceeding, because, like the pure soul of which they are the fitting outward representation, you must keep them from filth if you would have them remain undefiled. My pride is in knowing that my wife is truth itself. By-the-by, I will do myself the pleasure of

having a word with your pensioner before she departs."

"She has gone," replied Lucrece, without turning her head.

"You surprise me. Is there, then, two shadows of your charming self extant? It seems incredible, but I must believe it if my wife asserts that fact."

He was crossing to the door that opened inward to her sleeping room. She turned her face toward him then—set, icy in its forced calm.

"I beg that you will not enter there," with an effort crushing back the tremor in her voice. But with a chill "Allow me to remind you that mine is now the higher prerogative, madam!" he passed on.

She stood as motionless, as white, as cold as a marble figure, while minutes went by. Presently he returned, his mask-like countenance unmoved.

"She is gone. I ask your pardon for having apprehended the true meaning of your words. Truly, these people are consciousness in their demands upon their betters. After your kindness, to think she should presume to die in your house! I read your generous heart so well that I know you have forgiven the presumption, and ordered the removal of the remains, and its burial at your expense. Your example stimulates my charitable zeal. We will let the bridal tour pass and bring the funeral from here, and by this little act of self-sacrifice crown the perfection of our wedded bliss. Have you anything to say?"

"This I knew her."

"Yes?"

"You have not failed to observe that there was a likeness between us," she said, stonily.

"She was a cousin, a poor and friendless girl whom my father took into his house and gave equal advantages with myself. She disappointed our expectations of her by a clandestine marriage. Her husband was a villain, and I believe treated her badly. It gave me a shock to see her appear to-day. I had her brought into the house privately; as soon as I was free I went to her and found her—dead!"

"Very pathetic!"

Did her hearing deceive her, or was there a sneer in the tone?

"Very pathetic and very suggestive. Folly and wickedness invariably lead to woeful ends. Do you know that I firmly believe if you had broken your promise to me, if you had been false to your plighted faith, that you might even now be punished by the fate you invoked—that even now you might be lying in her place?"

"Oh," she cried, with passionate pleading, "take me away. This place stifles me. I am not myself; it unnerves me. Death's shadow is on me."

He shrank away from her. "My love is gone; it can never be revived. Was it not enough to kill it to know I had been fooled; that I had taken a base counterfeit to my heart? All my faith in mankind was blotted out in a single hour. Let the sin rest where it will, we cannot mend the past. And the future is too short for caring."

"Oh, not so! There must be no strife between you and that man. There will be none," she asserted, with bitter contempt.

"He is a coward as well as a villain, and now that he knows his exposure of me will bring him no gain, he will fly from the reach of your vengeance as fast as I could wish him."

"I thank you for the warning. It shall be observed. I will take steps not to be thwarted by poitronery."

He turned away and left the library, unchecked by a single word. But for all his expedition, cowardice won. Varley was nowhere to be found when Clandarrel's friend sought him. The news was taken to Clandarrel where he waited, and as the gray dawn broke he went back to his home, his brow black with portent of the sullen anger stirring in his heart. It looked dark for the woman who had dared to come between him and his will.

A light still burned in the library at that unusual hour. He pushed the door and was going in when the sight of his wife, half kneeling, half fallen, her head and shoulders in part supported by a chair, struck him with a pang of sharpest fear. In an instant he was beside her and saw that it was a dead face the light streamed over. There were writing-materials and the signs of their having been used upon a table near, but not a line for him. He needed none. He knew it was her warning had hastened Varley's flight, and that she had found death preferable to the dark life he had left her only choice.

Something more than the pity for which she had vainly plead touched him then.

Little matter that he sunk down now and called her name in frenzied tones. Little matter that the love which would have glorified her lot, in the light of which all the evil would have been left behind and all that was pure and womanly would have replaced it, broke the cruel fetters which had bound it.

Oh, the poverty of that revenge which had cast its black shadow on his life, the price of which was all joy and all hope stricken from him. The woman he had loved was dead.

"I must have money," he was saying, doggedly.

"So you have said before, and as I have told you, you never will receive one dollar from me."

"We shall see. You will make over to me Lucrece Trevor's portion, or the two years' fare you have played, madame, ends here."

"You know that money went to liquidate the debt."

"I know that you have three times as much at your disposal; and that you, rolling in riches, have not half my rightful claim to them. I am moderate in my demands. Be reasonable."

"Once for all, I utterly refuse. Do your worst. You cannot make me more miserable than I am."

"Not if I assert my claim to my wife?"

"Villain!"

"I have every proof that Lucrece Trevor bears such a year before Clandarrel's return. Deny me again and I shall use those proofs."

"You would use them all the same if I were to give you that money. It would only prolong my suspense."

"But that would be something," he said, coolly. "I foresaw you would come to my terms. It did not require a prophetic gift. I knew you would, because you are silly enough to care for him. All women are alike in that. The more a fellow ill-treats them the closer they cling to him."

She had put up her hands to cover her face, but she dropped them and looked at him with a steadiness born of despair.

"I know you too well to trust you; and if I could, I would not buy your silence with my husband's money. All that need be said is said in that."

"Not quite," Both started. It was Clandarrel himself standing before them, serene as ever. "The law of our land does not allow two husbands to one lady, but we, Mr. Varley, will not appeal to the law for a decision between us. I think you understand. You will hear from me further during the evening."

With a Chesterfield bow of dismissal, Mr. Clandarrel held open the door. Varley hesitated, glanced from one to the other, but finally went without a word. Clandarrel would have followed him out, but a hand upon his arm stayed him.

"You were here? You heard what passed?"

"I was in the window embrasure and heard all."

"And you believe it? You believe me that man's wife? It is not true. I was never that."

"The time has come when all concealments must be swept away, but oh! how can I tell all?"

"It is only fair to warn you that I have ample proofs in my possession that Lucrece Trevor did marry Varley at the time he claims. This revelation is not the surprise

you think it to me, but simply a confirmation of what had already reached my knowledge."

"Lucrece was his wife; I never was. I am not she. No, I do not rave. I am the cousin; it was she who died upon our wedding day. You cannot hate me worse for telling the truth at last."

"Go on!" She did, and the story was told in hurried, broken tones, of how easy it had been, after the time which had elapsed, to carry out the deception which her resemblance of her cousin had first suggested, and how she had counted upon Lucrece's dread of his implacable wrath to keep her silent.

"Her death," she said, "left me in greater danger than while she lived. Of Varley's baseless and cupidity you have some idea. The fortune he had expected with her had been the only lure. When he was free he formed his plan. While I claimed to be Lucrece I was in his power, and he used it cruelly. That he tried to extort money from me, and with what result you know. It is all that I need say."

"It is not. I wish to know all. It was the certainty that you could not trust him made you refuse. It was my discovery that Lucrece was really his wife leads you now to confide in me. Am I right?"

"It was more than these. My punishment was heavier than I could bear. I loathed myself for my own treachery. Sooner or later I must have been driven to tell you the truth."

"Have you any idea of how we Clandarrels avenge deceit?"

"The worst that could had already befallen me. I was an outcast from your love."

"Pardon me. I know in the hour I married you all you have told me now. I saw Lucrece before you went to her. I knew I was wedded to an adventuress who had played a high stake for her own advancement. I knew that the only woman I had ever loved had played me false, and that her life was the forfeit. I sought out Varley and brought him here. I robbed your career of all its anticipated triumphs. The end will be a conflict, and whether Varley or I, your lot henceforth will be equally desolate. Unless," bitterly, "a new victim falls under the reign of the siren."

She held her clasped hands toward him with an anguished cry.

"Have you no pity? Can you not see that I love you? Forgive me. I have never repented your unkindness. I will be happy as your slave if you will speak one little word of pardon."

He shrank away from her. "My love is gone; it can never be revived. Was it not enough to kill it to know I had been fooled; that I had taken a base counterfeit to my heart? All my faith in mankind was blotted out in a single hour. Let the sin rest where it will, we cannot mend the past. And the future is too short for caring."

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